

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants, the condenser fan motor including a housing and an output shaft, said method utilizing a dust shield including a shroud, a center opening through the shroud, and a hub extending around a perimeter of the opening, wherein the hub includes a spring member, and a hood portion extending from the shroud in a direction generally opposite to the direction the hub extends from the shroud, said method comprising the steps of

fitting the opening of the shroud over the output shaft;

inserting the output shaft through the opening;

engaging the hub to the output shaft, wherein the spring member expands the hub outward as the hub receives the output shaft thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft; and

positioning the dust shield adjacent the housing such that the shroud ~~and the hood portion define~~ defines an enclosure to encompass a part of the housing to prevent contaminants from reaching a portion of the output shaft adjacent the housing.

2. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the hub is tapered toward a center of the opening, said step of engaging the hub to the output shaft comprising the step of stretching the hub around the output shaft, ~~thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft.~~

3. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the hub includes at least one slot separating a portion of the hub, said method of inserting the output shaft through the opening comprising the step of enlarging the at least one slot with the output shaft.

4. (currently amended) A condenser fan motor dust shield for shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants wherein the condenser fan motor has an output shaft, said condenser fan motor dust shield comprising:

a shroud;

a central opening through said shroud and configured to receive the output shaft;

a hub extending from said shroud and adapted to obstruct at least a portion of said opening, said hub comprising a spring member configured to allow said hub to expand, wherein said hub is configured to ~~receive~~ expand when the output shaft is received in said central opening; and

~~a hood portion extending from said shroud in a direction generally opposite to the direction said hub extends from said shroud, wherein said shroud and said hood portion form an enclosure configured to surround at least a portion of the condenser fan motor.~~

5. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said hub is tapered toward a center of said opening.

6. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said hub further comprises at least one slot.

7. (currently amended) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 ~~wherein an opening extension of said shroud connects to said~~ comprising a plurality of spring members and said hub are, each spring member separated by a plurality of expansion slots. an expansion slot.

8. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said shroud and said hub are integrally molded.

9. (currently amended) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said ~~central opening comprises a tapered opening~~, shroud comprises a flat cover and a cylindrical extension extending from an outer perimeter of said cover.

10. (currently amended) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with ~~Claim 4~~ Claim 9 wherein said opening and said ~~hood portion~~ cylindrical extension coincide along a longitudinal axis.

11. (currently amended) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly comprising:

a motor comprising a housing and an output shaft; and

a dust shield attached to said shaft, said dust shield comprising a shroud, and a hub extending from said shroud, said hub comprising a spring member configured to allow said hub to expand ~~adapted to flex~~ around said shaft, ~~and a hood portion extending from said shroud in a direction generally opposite to the direction said hub extends from said shroud,~~ wherein said shroud ~~and said hood portion form~~ forms an enclosure which encloses an area of said housing and said shaft.

12. (original) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises at least one slot.

13. (original) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said shroud comprises a center opening, and said hub is tapered so as to obstruct said opening for press fit connection to said shaft.

14. (currently amended) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said shroud comprises a cover portion and ~~said hood portion comprises~~ a cylindrical portion extending from said cover portion.

15. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises an opening extension extending from said shroud and a plurality of spring members extending from said opening extension.

16. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said spring members are separated by a plurality of expansion slots.

17. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises a transition portion having a frustoconical cross section such that said hub is friction fit onto said output shaft as said dust shield is mounted to said output shaft.

18. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises a plurality of spring members configured to exert a force on the output shaft, thereby engaging said hub to the output shaft and holding the dust shield in place.